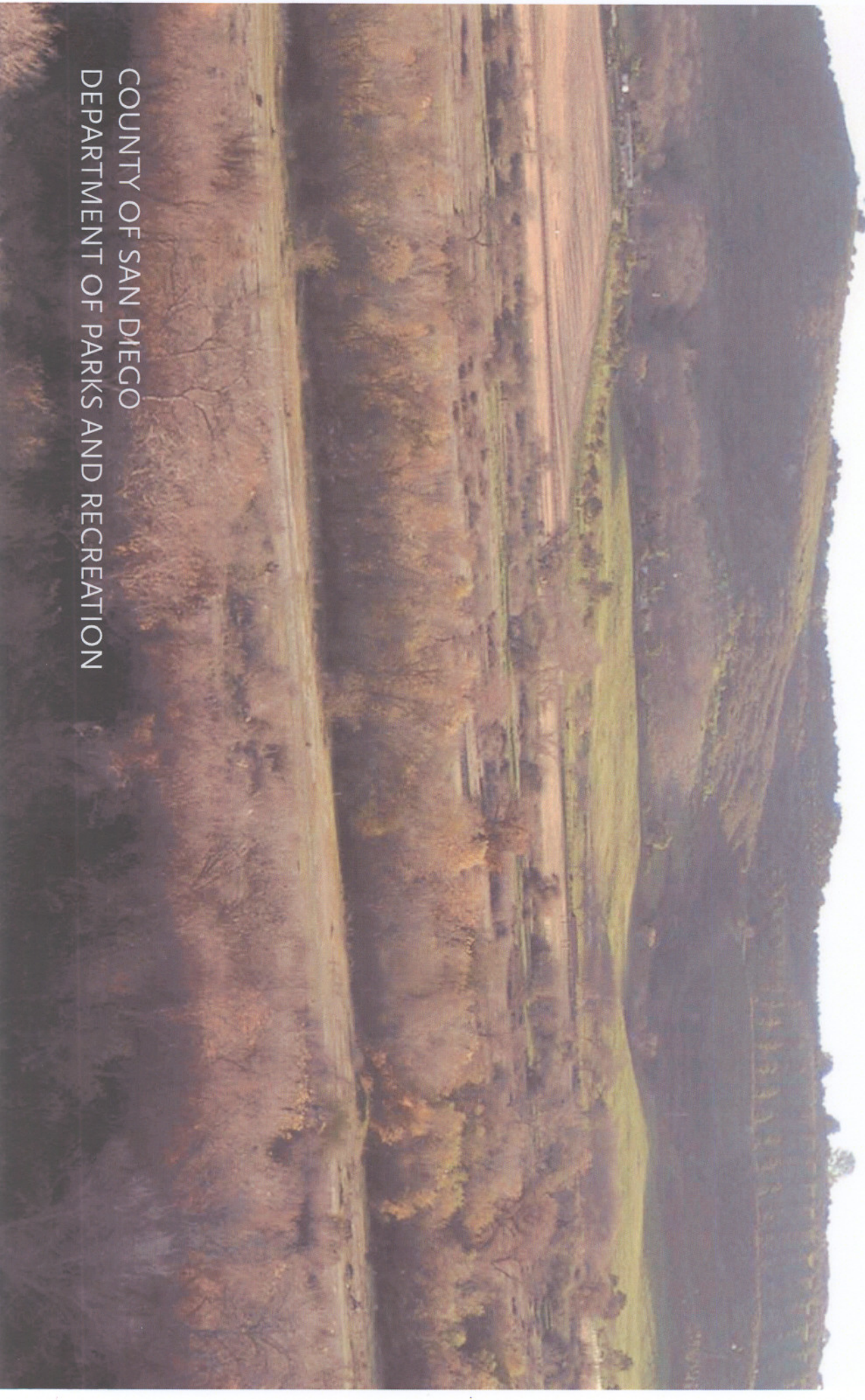


SAN LUIS REY RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



12/14/07

SAN LUIS REY RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT

Project Overview

In August 2004, the County of the San Diego commenced the preparation of the Master Plan for the San Luis Rey River Park along the 8.5-mile stretch of the San Luis Rey River corridor between I-15 and the old Bonsall Bridge, in northern San Diego County. This Master Plan establishes a framework for the creation of a River Park incorporating much-needed passive and active recreational amenities for the Fallbrook and Bonsall community planning areas, as well as an outstanding habitat preserve and multi-use trail system serving the larger region. The San Luis Rey River corridor is rich with riparian and upland habitat as well as cultural resources. The San Luis Rey River Park will provide unique opportunities for preservation and appreciation of these unique resources.

Master Plan Process

The twelve-month planning process included data gathering, defining the project boundary (Core Study Area or CSA), site analyses, park programming, presentation/ discussion of planning alternatives, and compilation of this Master Plan document summarizing analyses, recommendations, and alternatives considered. Public outreach and coordination with resource agencies and Caltrans were fundamental to the development of the Master Plan. A continuation of these outreach and coordination efforts will be equally critical in the development of park implementation projects

arising from this Master Plan. The Master Plan document is a collaborative product of the Planning Team, which consists of the County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation (Client), Hargreaves Associates (Prime and Design Lead - landscape architecture and planning), Mooney - Jones & Stokes (natural

and cultural resources), Nasland Engineering (river hydraulics and floodplain issues), Ninyo & Moore Geotechnical and Environmental Science Consultants (water quality and water resources), and A.D. Hinshaw Associates (environmental processing).



San Diego County Vicinity Map

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Master Plan document is organized in the following chapters:

I. Introduction

The introduction includes an overview and explanation of the San Luis Rey River Park (SLRRP) Master Plan, the planning process, the planning context, and primary goals for the San Luis Rey (SLR) River Park.

II. Community Input

This planning process was facilitated by public input gathered through four public meetings, Master Plan Advisory Group (MPAG) meetings, multiple focus group meetings, and written surveys. Community input early in the planning process and feedback in response to planning alternatives was essential to the Master Plan process and the development of the Final Plan.

III. Analysis and Synthesis

Site analyses consisted of studying existing physical and perceptual conditions within the CSA, as well as a records search and assessment of the biologic and cultural resources. Much of the more detailed analyses focused on the sensitive biologic resources within this segment of the river corridor. The San Luis Rey River corridor is also rich in Native American resources, with many different tribal groups having historical and current ties to the San Luis Rey River. Analyses were compiled into

a series of topical white papers, each of which summarized primary opportunities and constraints of SLR River Park development.

Desired park amenities were identified through public surveys, public input at community meetings, MPAG input, County Department of Parks and Recreation priorities for the project, and a review of similar precedent parks. An assessment of the existing recreational facilities within the park's anticipated service area, and the current needs of the community informed recommendations regarding quantities and distribution of proposed recreational amenities within the larger River Park CSA. Population densities and park-related traffic impacts were also analyzed to determine appropriate locations for active park uses.

IV. Master Plan

After thorough analyses of the CSA and the needs of the community, two basic planning/programming alternatives were developed. Based on further feedback from the public, MPAG, and focus groups, a Preferred Plan was then created, combining preferred elements of the two Planning Alternatives. The Final Plan integrates refinements of the Preferred Plan with more elaborated design and programming concepts for potential active park sites. The documentation of the planning process will allow subsequent users of this document to understand not only conclusions and planning

recommendations, but also how and why conclusions were reached. Finally, the anticipated park implementation process is described. Although the County is currently in the process of seeking the acquisition of high-priority properties for park development, implementation of park improvements will only occur after the County has completed an Environmental Impact Report.

V. Appendices

After extensive study and documentation of the physical and cultural attributes of the CSA, this data was synthesized into a series of opportunity and constraint diagrams and white paper reports that clarified opportunities and constraints for park development relating to environmental, cultural, biologic, hydrologic, and water quality aspects of the river corridor. Through this synthesis, potential park development sites were identified and evaluated in terms of ability to accommodate various desired park amenities. These reports are summarized within the Analysis and Synthesis Chapter (III), but can be found in their entirety in the appendices.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Concurrent Initiatives

The County of San Diego recognized the benefit of developing the River Park Master Plan in coordination with several major concurrent initiatives: Caltrans' improvements of State Route 76, the North County Multiple Species Conservation Program, the County Trails Program, and General Plan 2020 .

With the intention of lessening traffic congestion along the section of State Route 76 (SR-76) which runs parallel and immediately adjacent to this stretch of the San Luis Rey River corridor, Caltrans is currently planning the improvements of this segment of SR-76. These improvements will result in impacts upon biologically sensitive riparian habitat that will require significant mitigation. The County would like to establish a structure within the San Luis Rey River Park that will allow the park to become a major recipient of Caltrans' and other mitigation lands. These lands would be incorporated into the River Park as vital components of the Park's preservation/ restoration core.

The North County Multiple Species Conservation Program (NCMSCP) is a program intended to protect biodiversity and preserve habitat and open space while enhancing the region's quality of life. These are also primary goals for the River Park. The Master Plan will follow the guidelines established by the NCMSCP.

The County Trails Program has established
San Luis Rey River Park Master Plan

the Community Trails Master Plan (CTMP) which allows communities to be involved in trail design and management guidelines and implementation strategies. The CTMP was developed by staff from the following County Departments: Parks and Recreation, Planning and Land Use, and Public Works, which make up the Trails Management Team. The San Luis Rey River Park will implement and supplement CTMP trails proposals.

The County of San Diego is also presently working on General Plan (GP2020), which addresses present and future land use, transportation, housing, historic preservation, open space and other important community components. The area that encompasses the San Luis Rey River Park will be primarily designated as rural lands (RL-40) in GP2020. Developing a park along this segment of the river corridor is consistent with this designation.



Site Map

History

The cultural history of the San Luis Rey River is known from the time of the Luiseño people, the Spanish name for the Native Americans inhabiting this area. In the late 1700's the Spanish arrived in this area, building the Mission San Luis Rey in 1798. The Mexican government took control of the Missions in the 1830's and Mission lands were awarded as land grants to

individuals for grazing cattle and sheep. As a result, much of the land was stripped of its vegetation cover, resulting in increased erosion. After declaring war on Mexico in 1846, the United States incorporated California as the 31st state in 1850. The Luiseños were moved to small reservations that were created by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1875 and added to over subsequent years.



Luiseño woman
http://www.skinstotal.com/MSN/fondos_messenger_602.htm

The San Luis Rey River was dammed (Henshaw Dam) in 1922, to capture water for irrigation. More recently, population growth, river-adjacent development, and agriculture have strained available water supplies and diminished wetlands and habitat, while increasing erosion and nutrient rich runoff.

Sand and gravel mining, previously prevalent within this stretch of the SLR River corridor, lowers the river bed and reduces the sand's function as a natural filter, thereby impacting habitat quality. Municipal use of the Mission aquifer also diminishes the quality of the water in the river. (Summarized from the San Luis Rey Management Framework, California Poly Technical University, 1990).

Active and Passive Recreation

As a result of increased population trends in recent years, Fallbrook and Bonsall, the two community planning areas adjacent to this portion of the San Luis Rey River, are in need of additional recreational amenities, particularly recreational sports fields. This Master Plan, through incorporation of diversely programmed active and passive recreation nodes, will help to satisfy this local recreational need. Within the sensitive context of the river corridor and floodplain, active recreation nodes in particular must be carefully located to work in synergy with park's preservation/ restoration core, while minimizing park-related traffic congestion along SR-76.

Biologic/ Cultural Resources

The San Luis Rey River is rich in biological and cultural resources, including several threatened, endangered and rare species. Many Native American artifacts and traditional gathering and ceremonial sites have also been identified and mapped within this segment of the river corridor. While discrete nodes of active recreational park development are a priority of the River Park, they will need to be planned for compatibly with these sensitive resources. Preservation and interpretation of these sensitive resources is one of the primary goals of this Master Plan. A linked series of interpretative signage/ displays could become an important connective thread throughout the San Luis Rey River Park, helping to stitch the park's various active/ passive recreation nodes and preservation lands into a cohesive entity.

Connectivity

In addition to active recreation nodes and biological and cultural resources preservation/ restoration/ interpretation, the Master Plan identifies a trail network that will serve as the essential armature of the San Luis Rey River Park; connecting the diverse park amenities, with surrounding neighborhoods, activity nodes, and regional trails. The park's trail system will institutionalize year-round public access and continuous circulation from north of I-15 to the area south of the old Bonsall Bridge, within the riparian zone and adjacent upland areas.

San Luis Rey River Park Master Plan

Summary

This Master Plan establishes the framework for a River Park that creates a sensitive balance between natural system and cultural resource preservation/ interpretation and recreational park development.



Vicinity Map

MASTER PLAN GOALS

Balance recreational, cultural, and educational programming with preservation of the river's biologic/ cultural resources.

Enhance the SLR River corridor as an open space amenity.

Preserve the rural character of the area.

Provide linkages to communities and adjacent land users.

Provide active recreation opportunities for surrounding communities.

Accommodate the recreational needs of surrounding communities within the park's service area.

Enhance/ preserve/ interpret SLR River's biologic and ecologic resources.

Protect and enhance critical habitat for the several threatened and endangered species within the river corridor.

Identify appropriate locations for bird watching areas and interpretive signage.

Identification and removal of invasive, non-native species.

Celebrate and Interpret SLR River's Cultural/ Historic Resources.

Propose interpretive themes within the River Park.

Incorporate non-sensitive cultural/ historical sites into an interpretive education program.

Provide an Interpretive Gathering Area(s) adjacent to river resources.

Create Opportunities for Multi-use Trail Network.

Create a continuous trail network from I-15 to past the Old Bonsall Bridge, which may require trail bridges.

Provide multi-use trails for equestrians, bikers, and hikers.

Enrich park trails with passive recreation amenities that encourage resting, observing, picnicking, bird watching etc.

Develop Holistic Water Management/ Quality Strategies.

Encourage stormwater infiltration and remediation.

Retain flood control while preserving/ enhancing natural stream flow dynamics.

